

REMARKS

Claims 1-13, 24, 28, 29 and 31-35 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 28, 29 and 31 are amended and claim 26 is canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter disclosed therein. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-13, 24, 26, 28, 29 and 31-35 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph. Independent claims 1, 28, 29 and 31 are amended to remove the recitation of a lattice space-adjusting layer. Accordingly, the claims now satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph. As such, withdrawal of the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 29 and 31 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. The claims are amended to remove the recitation of a lattice space-adjusting layer. Accordingly, the claims now satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. As such, withdrawal of the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-13, 24, 26, 28, 29 and 31-35 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Umeda et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,645,646). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

In particular, Umeda fails to disclose or suggest a magnetic recording medium wherein a magnetization curve of the magnetic recording medium with respect to an external magnetic field exhibits a hysteresis loop, a point at which a rate of change of magnetization with respect to the external magnetic field exhibits a local maximum when the external magnetic field is lowered after magnetization is saturated, exists in a positive area of the external magnetic field, and an exchange coupling magnetic field, which is determined from

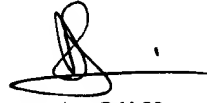
the magnetization curve, is not less than 1 kOe, as recited in independent claims 1, 28, 29 and 31.

Specifically, Umeda teaches a magnetic recording medium that includes an exchange layer structure and a magnetic layer provided on the exchange layer structure that includes a ferromagnetic layer and a non-magnetic coupling layer provided on the ferromagnetic layer and a magnetic bonding layer between the ferromagnetic layer and the non-magnetic coupling layer (Abstract). Moreover, Umeda teaches in-plane magnetization curves (Figs. 3-6) that exhibit a hysteresis loop, however, Umeda's magnetization curves do not exhibit a hysteresis loop in which a rate of change or magnetization with respect to the external magnetic field exhibits a local maximum when the external magnetic field is lowered after magnetization is saturated, and an exchange coupling magnetic field determined from the magnetization curve that is not less than 1 kOe, as recited in the independent claims. Accordingly, Umeda fails to disclose, suggest or render obvious the features of independent claims 1, 28, 29 and 31. As such, independent claims 1, 28, 29 and 31, and their dependent claims, are patentable over Umeda. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-13, 24, 28, 29 and 31-35 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Tarik M. Nabi
Registration No. 55,478

JAO:TMN/tje

Attachment:
Petition for Extension of Time

Date: August 2, 2005

OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

<p>DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION Please grant any extension necessary for entry; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 15-0461</p>
--